

COMPARISON OF WHITE HOUSE AND JUDICIARY  
COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPTS OF EIGHT RECORDED  
PRESIDENTIAL CONVERSATIONS

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HEARINGS  
BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
NINETY-THIRD CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

PURSUANT TO

H. Res. 803

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE  
ON THE JUDICIARY TO INVESTIGATE WHETHER SUFFICIENT  
GROUNDS EXIST FOR THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO  
EXERCISE ITS CONSTITUTIONAL POWER TO IMPEACH

RICHARD M. NIXON  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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	Page
Foreword -----	v
September 15, 1972-----	1
February 28, 1973-----	7
March 13, 1973-----	11
March 21, 1973, a.m.-----	17
March 21, 1973, p.m.-----	31
March 22, 1973-----	39
April 16, 1973, a.m.-----	51
April 16, 1973, p.m.-----	55



## FOREWORD

By HON. PETER W. RODINO, JR., CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

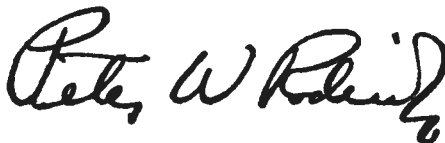
On July 9, 1974, the Committee on the Judiciary released a volume entitled "Transcripts of Eight Recorded Presidential Conversations." The conversations among President Nixon, John Dean and others took place on September 15, 1972; February 28, 1973; March 13, 1973; March 21, 1973 (two conversations); March 22, 1973 and April 16, 1973 (two conversations).

Transcripts of seven of these eight conversations (all except the conversation on the afternoon of April 16, 1973) were initially delivered by President Nixon to the Special Prosecutor between January 1 and 9, 1974, and to the Committee between March 8 and 15, 1974. White House transcripts of these eight conversations appeared in a publication entitled "Submission of Recorded Presidential Conversations" delivered to the Committee and released by President Nixon to the public on April 30, 1974.

The seven White House transcripts received by the Special Prosecutor in January 1974 and by the Committee in March 1974 are nearly the same (except for minor differences, deletion of expletives, and the differences footnoted in this document in the September 15, 1972 conversation) as the published White House edited transcripts.

This document contains comparisons between certain passages in the transcripts of the eight conversations delivered by the President to the Committee and released to the public in April and the same passages as transcribed by the Committee's Inquiry staff. It does not reflect all differences between the two sets of transcripts. It does not draw any conclusions as to the reasons for, or the significance of, the differences. It has been prepared solely as an aid to the Committee in its deliberations. Each of the passages compared in this volume should be read in the context of the entire conversation from which it is taken.

Page citations are to the volume entitled, "Transcripts of Eight Recorded Presidential Conversations" published by the Committee, and to the blue volume released by the White House entitled, "Submission of Recorded Presidential Conversations, April 30, 1974."

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Peter W. Rodino, Jr." in a cursive style.



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**Conversation in the Oval Office**

**Among the President, H. R. Haldeman, and John Dean**

**SEPTEMBER 15, 1972, FROM 5:24 TO 6:17 P.M.**

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## SEPTEMBER 15, 1972

### HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 2

PRESIDENT. Well, you had quite a day today, didn't you? You got, uh, Watergate, uh, on the way, huh?

DEAN. Quite a three months.

### WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 55

P [. . .] You had quite a day today didn't you. You got Watergate on the way didn't you?

D We tried.

### HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 9-10

PRESIDENT. They're all in it together.

DEAN. That's right.

PRESIDENT. They should just, uh, just behave and, and, recognize this, this is, again, this is war.

We're getting a few shots and it'll be over. And, we'll give them a few shots. It'll be over. Don't

worry. [Unintelligible] I wouldn't want to be on the other side right now. Would you? I wouldn't want to be in Edward Bennett Williams', Williams' position after this election.

DEAN. No. No.

PRESIDENT. None of these bastards—

DEAN. He, uh, he's done some rather unethical things that have come to light already, which in—again, Richey has brought to our attention.

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

DEAN. He went down—

HALDEMAN. Keep a log on all that.

DEAN. Oh, we are, on these. Yeah.

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

HALDEMAN. Because afterwards that is a guy,

PRESIDENT. We're going after him.

### WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 64-65

P We are all in it together.

This is a war.

We take a few shots and it will be over. We will give them a few shots and it will be over. Don't worry. I

wouldn't want to be on the other side right now. Would you?

[P I wouldn't want to be in Edward Bennett Williams' position after this election.] <sup>1</sup>

[D No.]

[He has done some rather unethical things that have come about already and Ritchie has brought them to our attention.]

[H Keep a log on them]

[because afterwards that is a guy]

---

<sup>1</sup> The bracketed material does not appear in the volume of White House edited transcripts, "Submission of Recorded Presidential Conversation, April 30, 1974." It is in the White House transcript which was given to the Special Prosecutor in January 1974 and the Judiciary Committee in March 1974.

HALDEMAN. that is a guy we've got to ruin.

DEAN. He had, he had an ex parte—

PRESIDENT. You want to remember, too, he's an attorney for the Washington Post.

DEAN. I'm well aware of that.

PRESIDENT. I think we are going to fix the son-of-a-bitch. Believe me. We are going to. We've got to, because he's a bad man.

DEAN. Absolutely.

PRESIDENT. He misbehaved very badly in the Hoffa matter. Our—some pretty bad conduct, there, too, but go ahead.

DEAN. Well, that's uh, along that line, uh, one of the things I've tried to do, is just keep notes on a lot of people who are emerging as,

PRESIDENT. That's right.

DEAN. as less than our friends.

PRESIDENT. Great.

[we have to ruin.] <sup>1</sup>

[P You want to remember he is also the lawyer for the Washington Post.]

[We are going to fix (expletive deleted) believe me. We've got to. He is a bad man.]

[He misbehaved very badly in the (inaudible).]

D Along that line, one of the things I've tried to do, I have begun to keep notes on a lot of people who are emerging as

less than our friends [. . .]

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<sup>1</sup> The bracketed material does not appear in the volume of White House edited transcripts, "Submission of Recorded Presidential Conversations, April 30, 1974." It is in the White House transcript which was given to the Special Prosecutor in January 1974 and the Judiciary Committee in March 1974.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 15

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 71

HALDEMAN. The Post is—

PRESIDENT. The Post has asked—  
it's going to have its problems.

HALDEMAN. [Unintelligible]

DEAN. The networks, the networks  
are good with Maury coming back three  
days in a row and—

PRESIDENT. That's right. Right.  
The main thing is the Post is going  
to have damnable, damnable problems  
out of this one. They have a  
television station

DEAN. That's right, they do.

PRESIDENT. and they're going to  
have to get it renewed.

HALDEMAN. They've got a radio  
station, too.

PRESIDENT. Does that come up too?  
The point is, when does it come up?

DEAN. I don't know. But the  
practice of non-licensees filing on top  
of licensees has certainly gotten more,

PRESIDENT. That's right.

DEAN. more active in the, in the  
area.

PRESIDENT. And it's going to be  
God damn active here.

DEAN. [Laughs]

PRESIDENT. Well, the game has to be  
played awfully rough. I don't know—  
Now, you, you'll follow through with—  
who will over there? Who—Timmons,  
or with Ford, or—How's it going to  
operate?

HALDEMAN. I'll talk to Bill. I  
think—Yeah.

[P Sure. This is alright.  
The main thing is the Post is going  
to have damnable time—  
they have a  
television station]<sup>1</sup>

[and they are going to  
have it renewed.]

[H They have a radio  
station, too.]

[P Does that come under too?]

[D Non-licensees file  
on top of licensees.]

[P It is going to be  
(expletive deleted) active here.]

[P The game has to be.  
played awfully rough. I don't know  
who now, but you will talk  
to Bill. I don't know  
which one.]

H Yes, I will talk to Bill.

<sup>1</sup> The bracketed material does not appear in the volume of White House edited transcripts, "Submission of Recorded Presidential Conversations, April 30, 1974." It is in the White House transcript which was given to the Special Prosecutor in January 1974 and the Judiciary Committee in March 1974.



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**Conversation in the Oval Office**

**Between the President and John Dean**

**FEBRUARY 28, 1793, FROM 9:12 TO 10:23 A.M.**

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## FEBRUARY 28, 1973

### HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 40

PRESIDENT. [. . .] I feel for those poor guys in jail, I mean, I don't know—particularly for Hunt. Hunt with his wife, uh dead. It's a tough thing.

DEAN. Well,

PRESIDENT. We have to do [unintelligible]

DEAN. every indication

PRESIDENT. You'll have to do—

DEAN. that they're they're hanging in tough right now.

PRESIDENT. What the hell do they expect, though? Do they expect that they will get clemency within a reasonable time?

DEAN. I think they do. [Unintelligible] going to do.

PRESIDENT. What would you say? What would you advise on that?

DEAN. Uh, I think it's one of those things we'll have to watch very closely. For example—

PRESIDENT. You couldn't do it, you couldn't do it, say, in six months?

DEAN. No.

PRESIDENT. No.

DEAN. No, you couldn't. [. . .]

### HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 40-41

PRESIDENT. [. . .] "I will not comment on the hearings while they are in process." [Unintelligible.] And then I, of course if they break through—if they get a lot luckier—But you see, it's best not to elevate—and I get Ziegler to do the same—it's best not to

### WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 102

P [. . .] I feel for those poor guys in jail, particularly for Hunt with his wife dead.

D Well there is

every indication

they are hanging in tough right now.

P What the hell do they expect though? Do they expect clemency in a reasonable time?

P What would you advise on that?

D I think it is one of those things we will have to watch very closely. For example—

P You couldn't do it, say, in six months.

D No, you couldn't. [. . .]

### WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 103

P [. . .] I will not comment on the hearings while they are in process. Of course if they break through—if they get muckraking—It is best not to cultivate

elevate that thing here  
to the White House. 'Cause I  
don't want the White House  
gabbing around about the  
God damned thing. Now there,  
of course, you'd say, "But  
you leave it all to them."

[High frequency tone for four  
seconds.]

PRESIDENT. our policy. But the  
President should not become  
[unintelligible] on this case.  
Do you agree to that?

that thing here  
at the White House. If  
it is done at the White House  
again they are going to drop the  
(adjective deleted) thing. Now there,  
of course, you say but  
you leave it all to them.  
We'll see as time goes on.  
Maybe we will have to change  
our policy. But the  
President should not become  
involved in any part of this case.  
Do you agree with that?

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 43

DEAN. . . . So I'm not worried

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

DEAN. about Herb at all.

PRESIDENT. Oh, well, it, it'll be  
hard for him, he—

'cause it'll, it'll get out  
about about Hunt. It, it—

I suppose the big thing is the  
financing transaction they'll  
go after. How did the money  
get to the Bank of Mexico,  
and so forth and so on.

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT p. 106

D [. . .] so I am not worried

about Herb at all.

P Oh well, it will be  
hard for him.

I suppose the big thing is the  
financing transaction that they will  
go after him for. How does the money  
get to the Bank of Mexico,  
etc.



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**Conversation in the Oval Office**  
**Among the President, John Dean, and H. R. Haldeman**

**MARCH 13, 1973, FROM 12:42 TO 2 P.M.**

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MARCH 13, 1973

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 71

PRESIDENT. Did Strachan?  
DEAN. Yes.  
PRESIDENT. He knew?  
DEAN. Yes.  
PRESIDENT. About the Watergate?  
DEAN. Yes.  
PRESIDENT. Well then, Bob knew.  
He probably told Bob, then.  
He may not have. He may not have.  
DEAN. He was, he was judicious in  
what he, in what he relayed, and, uh,  
but Strachan is as tough  
as nails. I—  
PRESIDENT. What'll he say? Just go  
in and say he didn't know?  
DEAN. He'll go in and stonewall it  
and say, "I don't know anything  
about what you are talking about."  
He has already done it twice,  
as you know, in interviews.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 72

DEAN. That's right. And I said,  
"Chuck, people have said that  
you were involved in this,  
involved in that, involved in this."  
And he said, "I—that's not  
true," and so on and so forth.  
Uh, I don't, I think that Chuck had  
knowledge that something  
was going on over there.  
A lot of people around here  
had knowledge that something  
was going on over there.  
They didn't have any knowledge  
of the details of the specifics  
of, of the whole thing.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 72

PRESIDENT. It was a dry hole, huh?  
DEAN. That's right.  
PRESIDENT. Jesus Christ.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 146

P Strachan?  
D Yes.  
P He knew?  
D Yes.  
P About the Watergate?  
D Yes.  
P Well, then,  
he probably told Bob.  
He may not have.  
D He was judicious in  
what he relayed,  
but Strachan is as tough  
as nails.

He can go in and stonewall,  
and say, "I don't know anything  
about what you are talking about."  
He has already done it twice  
you know, in interviews.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 147-48

D That's right. I said,  
"Chuck, people have said that  
you were involved in this,  
involved in that, involved in all of this.  
He said, "that is not  
true, etc."  
I think that Chuck had  
knowledge that something  
was going on over there,

but he didn't have any knowledge  
of the details of the specifics  
of the whole thing.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 148

P A dry hole?  
D That's right.  
P (Expletive deleted)

DEAN. Well, they were just really getting started.

PRESIDENT. Yeah. Yeah. But, uh, Bob one time said something about the fact

we got some information about this or that or the other, but, I, I think it was about the Convention, what

they were planning, I said [unintelligible].

So I assume that must have been MacGregor, I mean not MacGregor, but Segretti.

DEAN. No.

PRESIDENT. Bob must have known about Segretti.

DEAN. Well, I—Segretti really wasn't involved in the intelligence gathering to speak of at all.

D Well, they were just really getting started.

P Yeah.

Bob one time said something to me about something.

this or that or something, but I think it was something about the Convention, I think it was about the convention problems they were planning something.

I assume that must have been MacGregor—not MacGregor, but Segretti.

D No,

Segretti wasn't involved in the intelligence gathering piece of it at all.

#### HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 73

PRESIDENT [Unintelligible] to think that Mitchell and Bob would allow, would have allowed this kind of operation to be in the Committee.

DEAN. I don't think he knew it was there.

PRESIDENT. You kidding?

DEAN. I don't—

PRESIDENT. You don't think Mitchell knew about this thing?

DEAN. Oh, no, no, no. Don't mis—

I don't think he knew that people—

I think he knew that Liddy was out intelligence-gathering.

PRESIDENT. Well?

DEAN. I don't think he knew that Liddy would use a fellow like McCord, for God's sake, who worked for the Committee. I can't believe that. [. . .]

#### WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 149

P To think of Mitchell and Bob would have allowed—would have allowed—this kind of operation to be in the campaign committee!

D I don't think he knew it was there.

P I don't think that Mitchell knew about this sort of thing.

D Oh, no, no!

Don't misunderstand me.

I don't think that he knew the people.

I think he knew that Liddy was out intelligence gathering.

I don't think he knew that Liddy would use a fellow like McCord, (expletive removed), who worked for the Committee. I can't believe that.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 74

## WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 150

PRESIDENT. Well, what about the hang-out thing?

[Unknown person enters, receives instruction from the President to take something to Haldeman, and leaves the room.]

PRESIDENT. Uh, is it too late to, to, frankly, go the hang-out road? Yes, it is.

DEAN. I think it is. I think—Here's the—The hang-out road—

PRESIDENT. The hang-out road's going to have to be rejected.

I, some, I understand it was rejected.

DEAN. It was kicked around. Bob and I and, and, and—

PRESIDENT. I know Ehrlichman always felt that it should be hang-out.

[Unintelligible]

DEAN. Well, I think I convinced him why that he wouldn't want to hang-out either. There is a certain domino situation here.

[. . .]

P Is it too late to go the hang-out road?

D Yes, I think it is. The hang-out road—

P The hang-out road (inaudible).

D It was kicked around Bob and I and—

P Ehrlichman always felt it should be hang-out.

D Well, I think I convinced him why he would not want to hang-out either. There is a certain domino situation here.

[. . .]



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**Conversation in the Oval Office**

**Among the Pesident, John Dean, and H. R. Haldeman**

**MARCH 21, 1973, FROM 10:12 TO 11:55 A.M.**

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MARCH 21, 1973 A.M.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 84

DEAN. I will go back over that,  
and tell

PRESIDENT. Was that Colson?

DEAN. you where I think the,  
the soft spots are.

PRESIDENT. Colson—that, that, that  
Colson, uh, you think was the, uh,  
was the person who

DEAN. I think he,

PRESIDENT. pushed?

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 178

D I will go back over that,  
and take out any of

the soft spots.

P Colson,  
you think  
was the person who

pushed?

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 90

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible]. Maybe—  
Well, whether it's maybe too  
late to do anything about it,  
but I would certainly keep  
that, [laughs] that cover for  
whatever it's worth.

DEAN. I'll—

PRESIDENT. Keep the Committee.

DEAN. Af—, after, well, that, that, that's

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible]

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 187

P [unintelligible]

but I would certainly keep  
that cover for  
whatever it is worth.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 94

PRESIDENT. Let me say, there  
shouldn't be a lot of people  
running around getting money.  
We should set up a little—

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 194

P Let me say there  
shouldn't be a lot of people  
running around getting money—

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 96

PRESIDENT. Well, your, your major,  
your major guy to keep

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 196

P Your major  
guy to keep

under control is Hunt.

DEAN. That's right.

PRESIDENT. I think. Because he knows

DEAN. He knows so much.

PRESIDENT. about a lot of other things.

DEAN. He knows so much. Right.

Uh, he could sink Chuck Colson.

[. . .]

under control is Hunt?

D That is right.

P I think. Does he know a lot?

D He knows so much.

He could sink Chuck Colson.

[. . .]

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 96

DEAN. Now we've got

Kalmbach. [Coughs]

PRESIDENT. Yeah, that's a tough one.

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 197

D Now we've got

Kalmbach. [. . .]

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 97

DEAN. [. . .] Uh, I don't know of anything that Herb has done that is illegal, other than the fact that he doesn't want to blow the whistle on a lot of people, and may find himself in a perjury situation.

PRESIDENT. Well, if he, uh, he could—because he will be asked about that money?

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 198

D [. . .] I don't know of anything that Herb has done that is illegal, other than the fact that he doesn't want to blow the whistle on a lot of people, and may find himself in a perjury situation. [. . .]

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 97-98

PRESIDENT. How would you handle him, then, John.

For example, would you just have him put the whole thing out?

DEAN. [Draws breath]

PRESIDENT. I don't think so.

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 198

P How would you handle him, John, for example? Would you just have him put the whole thing out?

I mean I don't mind the  
five hundred thousand dollars  
and I don't mind the  
four hundred thousand dollars

DEAN. No, that,

PRESIDENT. for activities  
[unintelligible]

DEAN. that, that, uh, that  
doesn't bother me either.

There's—as I say, Herb's  
problems are

PRESIDENT. There's a surplus—

DEAN. politically embarrassing,  
but not as—not criminal.

PRESIDENT. Well, they're embarrassing,  
sure—he, he just handled matters  
that were between the campaigns,  
before anything was done. [. . .]

I don't mind the  
\$500,000  
and the  
\$400,000.

D No—that

doesn't bother me either.

As I say, Herb's  
problems are

politically embarrassing,  
but not criminal.

P Well  
he just handled matters  
between campaigns. [. . .]

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 98

PRESIDENT. All right. How do  
your other vulnerabilities go  
together?

DEAN. The other vulnerabilities:  
We've got a, uh, runaway  
Grand Jury up in the Southern  
District.

PRESIDENT. Yeah, I heard.

DEAN. They're after Mitchell and  
Stans on some sort of bribe  
or influence peddling

PRESIDENT. On Vesco.

DEAN. with Vesco.

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

DEAN. Uh, they're also going to try to drag  
Ehrlichman into that. Apparently,  
Ehrlichman had some meetings  
with Vesco, also.

Uh, Don Nixon, Jr., came in to  
see John a couple of  
times, uh, about the problem.

PRESIDENT. Not about the complaint.

DEAN. That, there's uh—  
the fact of the matter is—

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible] about  
a job.

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 199

P How about  
the other probabilities?

D We have a runaway  
Grand Jury up in the Southern  
District.

They are after Mitchell and  
Stans on some sort of bribe  
or influence peddling

with Vesco. [. . .]

D They are also going to try to drag  
Ehrlichman into that. Apparently  
Ehrlichman had some meetings  
with Vesco, also.

Don Nixon, Jr. came into  
see John a couple of  
times about the problem.

P Not about Vesco, but about  
Don, Jr.?

DEAN. That's right. And, and, and, uh, I—

PRESIDENT. We're, is it—  
Ehrlichman's totally to blame on that.

DEAN. Yeah, well, I think the White House—

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible]

DEAN. No one has done anything for—

PRESIDENT. —Vesco. Matter of—  
not for the prosecutor.

Erlichman never did anything for Vesco?

D No one at the White House

has done anything for Vesco.

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 100

DEAN. That's what really troubles me. For example, what happens if it starts breaking, and they do find a criminal case against a Haldeman, a Dean, a Mitchell, an Ehrlichman? Uh, that is—

PRESIDENT. Well if it really comes down to that, we cannot, maybe—We'd have to shed it in order to contain it again.

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 201

D That is what really troubles me. For example, what happens if it starts breaking, and they do find a criminal case against a Haldeman, a Dean, a Mitchell, an Ehrlichman? That is—

P If it really comes down to that, we would have to (unintelligible) some of the men.

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 100

DEAN. I know, sir, it is. Well I can just tell from our conversations that, you know, these are things that you have no knowledge of.

PRESIDENT. The absurdity of the whole damned thing,

DEAN. But it—

PRESIDENT. bugging and so on.  
[. . . .]

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 202

D I know, sir.  
I can just tell from our conversation that these are things that you have no knowledge of.

P You certainly can!

Buggings, etc! [. . . .]

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 100-01

PRESIDENT. Called [unintelligible] and said, "We've got a, we've got a good plan." I don't know what the

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 202

Christ he would be doing. Oh, I'll  
bet you. I know why.  
That was at the time of ITT.  
He was trying to get something  
going there because ITT,  
they were bugging us. I mean  
they were

DEAN. Right.

PRESIDENT. giving us hell.

DEAN. Well, I know, I know he used,  
uh,

PRESIDENT. Hunt to go out there?

DEAN. Hunt.

PRESIDENT. I know about it.

DEAN. Yeah.

PRESIDENT. I did know about it.

Uh, I knew that there was, there was  
something going on there,

DEAN. Right.

PRESIDENT. but I didn't know  
it was Hunt.

P All I know about  
is the time of ITT,  
he was trying to get something  
going there because ITT  
was

giving us a bad time.

D I know he used

Hunt.

P I knew about that.

I didn't know about it,  
but I knew there was  
something going on.

But I didn't know  
it was a Hunt.

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 104

DEAN. —to me there was  
no way

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

DEAN. that, uh—

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

DEAN. But to burden this second  
Administration

PRESIDENT. We're all in on it.

DEAN. was something that—  
It's something that is  
not going to go away.

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 207

D [...] You know, with me there was  
no way,

but the burden of this second  
Administration

is something that is  
not going to go away.

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 104

DEAN. And it seems to me the only  
way that—

PRESIDENT. Who else, though? Let's,  
let's leave you and—

I don't I don't,

I don't think on the, on,  
uh, on the obstruction  
of justice thing—

PRESIDENT. I know about it.

D And it seems to me the only  
way—

P Well, also so let's  
leave you out of it.

I don't think on  
the obstruction  
of justice thing—

I think that one we can handle.

I, I don't know why I  
feel that way, but I—

DEAN. Well, it is possible  
that I

PRESIDENT. I, I think you may be  
overplaying [. . .]

I take that out.

I don't know why, I  
think you may be over that cliff.

D Well, it is possible.

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 105

DEAN. I think we've got to  
look—

PRESIDENT. But at the moment, don't  
you agree that you'd better  
get the Hunt thing? I mean,  
that's worth it,  
at the moment.

DEAN. That, that's worth buying  
time on, right.

PRESIDENT. And that's buying time  
on, I agree.

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 209

D [. . .] I think we've got to  
look—

P But at the moment, don't  
you agree it is better  
to get the Hunt thing  
that's where that—

D That is worth buying  
time on

P That is buying time,  
I agree.

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 108

PRESIDENT. Let me say, though that  
Hunt [unintelligible] hard  
line, and that a convicted  
felon is going to go out  
and squeal [unintelligible]  
as we about this  
[unintelligible] decision  
[unintelligible]  
turns on that.

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 213

D [. . .] Let me say  
(unintelligible) How  
do we handle all  
(unintelligible)

who knew all about this  
in advance.

Let me have some of  
your thoughts on that.

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 109

PRESIDENT. [. . .] Whether the line  
is one of, uh, continuing to,  
uh, run a, try to run  
a total stone wall,  
and take the heat from that,  
uh, having in mind  
the fact that, uh, there are  
vulnerable points there;

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 215

P [. . .] Whether the line  
is one of continuing to  
run  
a kind of stone wall,  
and take the heat from that,  
having in mind  
the fact that there are  
vulnerable points there;—

the vulnerable points being, that, well, the first vulnerable points would be obvious. In other words, it would be if, uh, uh, one of the, uh, defendants, particularly Hunt, of course, who is the most vulnerable in my opinion, might, uh, blow the whistle, and he, he—and his price is pretty high, but at least, uh, we should, we should buy the time on that, uh, as I, as I pointed out to John. [ . . . ]

the vulnerable points being, the first vulnerable points would be obvious. That would be one of the defendants, either Hunt, because he is most vulnerable in my opinion, might blow the whistle and his price is pretty high, but at least we can buy the time on that as I pointed out to John. [ . . . ]

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 110

PRESIDENT. Fortunately, fortunately, with Chuck it is very—  
I, I talk to him about many, many political things, but I never talk about this sort of thing 'cause he's, uh, he's very harmful, I mean I don't think—he must be damn sure I don't know anything. And I don't. In fact, I'm rather surprised at what you told me today. From what you said, I gathered the impression, and of course your, your, your analysis does not for sure, uh, indicate that Chuck knew that it was a bugging operation for certain.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 112

PRESIDENT. That's right, but not—all right. The point is, the point is this, that, uh, it's now time, though, to, uh, that Mitchell has got to sit down, and know where the hell all this thing stands, too.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 218

P Ok. Fortunately, with Chuck it is very—I talk to him about many, many political things, but I have never talked with him about this sort of thing. Very probably, I think he must be damn sure that I didn't know anything. And I don't. In fact, I am surprised by what you told me today. From what you said, I gathered the impression, and of course your analysis does not for sure indicate that Chuck knew that it was a bugging operation.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 220

P The point is this, that it is now time, though, that Mitchell has got to sit down, and know where the hell all this thing stands, too.

You see, John is concerned, as you know, Bob, about, uh, Ehrlichman, which, uh, worries me a great deal because it's a, uh, it—and it, and this is why the Hunt problem is so serious, uh, because, uh, it had nothing to do with the campaign.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, pp. 114-15

PRESIDENT. And that means, we got to, we've got to keep it off of you, uh, which I, which I [unintelligible] obstruction of justice thing. We've got to keep it off Ehrlichman.

We've got to keep it, naturally, off of Bob, off Chapin, if possible, and Strachan. Right?

DEAN. Uh huh.

PRESIDENT. And Mitchell. Right?

DEAN. Uh huh.

PRESIDENT. Now.

HALDEMAN. And Magruder, if you can. But that's the one you pretty much have to give up.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 116

PRESIDENT. The only thing you could do with him would be to parole him for a period of time because of his family situation. But you couldn't provide clemency.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 118

HALDEMAN. And then they never replenished it, so we just gave

You see, John is concerned, as you know, about the Ehrlichman situation. It worries him a great deal because, and this is why the Hunt problem is so serious, because it had nothing to do with the campaign. [. . .]

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 225

P And that means keeping it off you.

Herb has started this Justice thing. We've got to keep it off Herb.

You have to keep it, naturally, off of Bob, off Chapin, if possible, Strachan, right?

D Uh, huh.

P And Mitchell. Right?

D Uh, huh.

H And Magruder, if you can.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 227

P The only thing we could do with him would be to parole him like the (unintelligible) situation. But you couldn't buy clemency.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 230

H They hadn't replenished, so we just gave



it all back anyway.

PRESIDENT. I have a feeling we could handle this one. Well—

DEAN. Well, first of all, they'd have a hell of a time proving it. Uh, that's one thing. Uh—

PRESIDENT. Yeah, yeah—I just have a feeling on it. But let's now come back to the money, a million dollars, and so forth and so on. Let me say that I think you could get that in cash,

and I know money is hard, but there are ways.

That could be [unintelligible].

But the point is, uh, what would you do on that—

Let's, let's look at the hard facts.

#### HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 119

PRESIDENT. Yeah, these fellows— But of course you know, these fellows though, as far as that plan was concerned.

HALDEMAN. But what is there?

PRESIDENT. As far as what happened up to this time, our cover there is just going to be the Cuban Committee did this for them up through the election.

#### HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 120

PRESIDENT. That's right. Just be damned sure you say I don't

HALDEMAN. Yeah—

PRESIDENT. remember; I can't recall, I can't give any honest, an answer to that that I can recall. But that's it.

it all back anyway.

P I had a feeling we could handle this one.

D Well, first of all, I would have a hell of a time proving it. That is one thing.

P I just have a feeling on it. Well, it sounds like a lot of money, a million dollars.

Let me say that I think we could get that.

I know money is hard to raise.

But the point is, what we do on that— Let's look at the hard problem—

#### WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 231

P These fellows though, as

far as what has happened up to this time, are covered on their situation, because the Cuban Committee did this for them during the election?

#### WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 235

P But you can

say I don't

remember. You can say I can't recall. I can't give any answer to that that I can recall.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 121

PRESIDENT. that's why your,  
for your immediate thing you've got  
no choice with Hunt but the  
hundred and twenty or whatever  
it is. Right?

DEAN. That's right.

PRESIDENT. Would you agree  
that that's a buy time thing,  
you better damn well get that  
done, but fast?

DEAN. I think he ought to be  
given some signal, anyway, to,  
to—

PRESIDENT. Yes.

DEAN. Yeah—you know.

PRESIDENT. Well for Christ's sakes  
get it in a, in a way that,  
uh—who's, who's going to talk  
to him? Colson? He's the one  
who's supposed to know him.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 122

DEAN. Well, I, uh, I gather  
LaRue just leaves it  
in mail boxes and  
things like that, and  
tells Hunt  
to go pick it up.  
Someone phones Hunt  
and tells him to  
pick it up. As I say,  
we're a bunch of  
amateurs in that  
business.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 122

PRESIDENT. Well, the main point, now,  
is the people who will need  
the money [unintelligible].  
Well of course, you've got  
the surplus from the campaign.  
That we have to account for.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 236-37

P That's why  
for your immediate things you have  
no choice but to come up with  
the \$120,000, or whatever  
it is. Right?

D That's right.

P Would you agree  
that that's the prime thing  
that you damn well better get that  
done?

D Obviously he ought to be  
given some signal anyway.

P (Expletive deleted),  
get it. In a way that  
—who is going to talk  
to him? Colson? He is the one  
who is supposed to know him?

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 237-38

D Well, I got it to  
LaRue by just leaving it  
in mail boxes and  
things like that. And

someone phones Hunt  
to come and  
pick it up. As I say,  
we are a bunch of  
amateurs in that  
business.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 238

P Well, of course you have  
a surplus from the campaign.

But if there's any other money  
hanging around—

Is there any other money  
hanging around?

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 125

PRESIDENT. But, but my point is,  
do you ever have any  
choice on Hunt? That's  
the point.

DEAN. [Sighs]

PRESIDENT. No matter what we do  
here now, John,

DEAN. Well, if we—

PRESIDENT. Hunt eventually, if he  
isn't going to get  
commuted and so forth,  
he's going to  
blow the whistle.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, P. 125-26

DEAN. Uh, we don't, it doesn't

PRESIDENT. Including Ehrlichman's use  
of Hunt on the other deal?

DEAN. That's right.

PRESIDENT. You'd throw that out?

DEAN. Uh, well, Hunt will go to  
jail for that too—he's  
got to understand that.

PRESIDENT. That's the point too. I  
don't think that—I  
wouldn't throw that out.

I think I would limit it to—  
I don't think you need to go  
into every God damned  
thing Hunt has done.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 129-30

PRESIDENT. All right. Fine. And, uh,  
my point is that, uh, we can, uh,  
you may well come—

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 242

P But my point is,  
do you ever have any  
choice on Hunt? That is  
the point.

No matter what we do  
here now, John,

whatever he wants if he  
doesn't get it—  
immunity, etc.,  
he is going to  
blow the whistle.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 243

D [. . .]—And we don't, it doesn't—

P (Unintelligible)  
for another year.

D That's right.

P And Hunt would get off by  
telling them the Ellsberg  
thing.

D No Hunt would go to  
jail for that too—he  
should understand that.

P That's a point too. I  
don't think I  
would throw that out.

I don't think we need to go  
into everything. (adjective deleted)  
thing Hunt has done.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 248

P Alright. Fine. And  
my point is that

I think it is good, frankly,  
to consider these various options.  
And then, once you, once you decide  
on the plan—John—  
and you had the right plan,  
let me say, I have no doubts  
about the right plan before  
the election. And you handled it  
just right. You contained it.  
Now after the election we've got  
to have another plan, because we can't  
have, for four years, we can't have  
this thing—we're going to be eaten  
away. We can't do it.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 130

DEAN. Well, there's been a change  
in the mood—

HALDEMAN. John's point is  
exactly right, that the erosion  
here now is going to you, and  
that is the thing that we've got  
to turn off, at whatever  
the cost. We've got to figure out  
where to turn it off at the  
lowest cost we can, but at  
whatever cost it takes.

DEAN. That's what, that's  
what we have to do.

PRESIDENT. Well, the erosion  
is inevitably going to come here,  
apart from anything, you know,  
people saying that, uh, well,  
the Watergate isn't a major  
concern. It isn't. But it would,  
but it will be. It's bound to be

DEAN. We cannot let you be  
tarnished by that situation.

PRESIDENT. Well, I [unintelligible]  
also because I—Although Ron Ziegler  
has to go out—They  
blame the [unintelligible] the White  
House [unintelligible]

DEAN. That's right.

PRESIDENT. We don't, uh, uh, I  
say that the White House  
can't do it. Right?

HALDEMAN. Yeah.

DEAN. Yes, sir.

I think it is good, frankly  
to consider these various options.  
And then, once you decide  
on the right plan, you say, "John,"

you say, "No doubts  
about the right plan before  
the election. You handled it  
just right. You contained it.  
And now after the election we have to  
have another plan. Because we can't  
for four years have  
this thing eating  
away." We can't do it.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 249

H We should change  
that a little bit.

John's point is  
exactly right. The erosion  
here now is going to you, and  
that is the thing that we have  
to turn off at whatever  
cost. We have to  
turn it off at the  
lowest cost we can, but at  
whatever cost it takes.

D That's what  
we have to do.

P Well, the erosion  
is inevitably going to come here,  
apart from anything and all the  
people saying well  
the Watergate isn't a major  
issue. It isn't. But  
it will be. It's bound to.

(Unintelligible)

has to go out. Delaying  
is the great danger to the White  
House area.

We don't  
I say that the White House  
can't do it. Right?

D Yes, Sir.

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**Conversation in the EOB Office**

**Among the President, John Dean, John Ehrlichman, and  
H. R. Haldeman**

**MARCH 21, 1973, FROM 5:20 TO 6:01 P.M.**

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HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TRANSCRIPT, p. 132

PRESIDENT. But, does, uh, does anybody, uh, really think, really think that really we should do nothing? That's the other, I mean, that's, that's the option, period. If, uh—keep fighting it out on this ground if it takes all summer.

HALDEMAN. Which it will.

PRESIDENT. That's the other thing, whether we're going to, say, to contain the thing.

EHRlichMAN. Well, we've talked about that. We talked about, uh, possible opportunities in the Senate, that, that may turn up that we don't foresee now.

In other words, that you go in and start playing for the odds.

Keep trying to put out fires here and there.

The problem of the Hunt thing [. . . .]

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 251-52

P [. . . .] Does

anybody really think we can do nothing?

That's the option, period.

If he fights it out on this ground, it takes all summer.

H Which it will.

P That's it, whether or not today at the danger point.

H Well, we have talked about that. We have talked about possible opportunities in the Senate. Things may turn up that we don't foresee now.

Some people may be sort of playing the odds.

E The problem of the Hunt thing [. . . .]

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

TRANSCRIPT, p. 133

EHRlichMAN. Well, my, my view is that, that, uh, Hunt's interests lie in getting a pardon if he can.

That ought to be, somehow or another, one of the options that he is most particularly concerned about. Uh, his, his indirect contacts with John don't contemplate that at all. Well, maybe they, maybe they contemplate it—but they say there's going [unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. I know.

HALDEMAN. That's right.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 252

E Well, my view is that Hunt's interests lie in getting a pardon if he can. That ought to be somehow or another one of the options that he is most particularly concerned about. Now, his indirect contacts with John don't contemplate that at all—(inaudible)

EHRlichMAN. They think that that's already understood.

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

EHRlichMAN. Uh—

PRESIDENT I mean he's got to get that by Christmas time.

DEAN. That's right. [. . .]

P He assumes that's already understood.

D He's got to get that by Christmas, I understand.

E That's right. [. . .]

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 133

PRESIDENT. If that blows.

EHRlichMAN. If that blows and, and that's, it seems to me, that the, uh—although at lea—It obviously is understood, that he has really gone over the ground with his attorney that's in there.

PRESIDENT. However, can he, by talking, uh, get pardoned? Get, get clemency from the court?

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 252–53

H If that blows—

E If that blows and that seems to me, although I doubt if he is understood, he has really turned over backwards since he has been in there. However, can he, by talking, get a pardon? Clemency from the Court? [. . .]

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 133

PRESIDENT. So then now—so the point we have to, the bridge you have to cut, uh, cross there is, uh, which you've got to cross, I understand, quite soon, is whether, uh, we, uh, what you do about, uh, his present demand.

Now, what, what, uh, what [unintelligible] about that?

DEAN. Well, apparently Mitchell and, and, uh, uh,

UNIDENTIFIED. LaRue.

DEAN. LaRue are now aware of it, so they know what he is feeling.

PRESIDENT. True. [Unintelligible] do something.

DEAN. I, I have, I have not talked with either.

I think they are in a position to do something, though.

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 253

P Yeah. And then so the point we have to, the bridge we have to cross there, that you have to cross I understand quite soon, is what you do about Hunt and his present finance? What do we do about that?

D Well apparently Mitchell and

LaRue are now aware of it so they know how he is feeling.

P True. Are they going to do something?

D Well, I have not talked with either of them. Their positions are sympathetic.



HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 134

DEAN. Oh, yeah. Uh, Dwight,  
for example, now wants a lawyer;  
uh, uh, Kalmbach  
has hired himself a lawyer;  
Colson has retained a lawyer; and  
now that we've [unintelligible]  
enough to know that self-protection  
is setting in.

PRESIDENT. Well, let's not trust them.

DEAN. Surely.

PRESIDENT. Maybe we face the situation,  
[. . . .]

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 254

D [...] Dwight,  
for example,  
  
hired himself a lawyer;  
Colson has retained a lawyer; and  
now that we are all  
starting the self-protection  
certainly.

P Maybe we face the situation  
[. . . .]

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 135

PRESIDENT. Yeah. That's right.  
That's the point. That's why  
I say I'm, I'm going to take  
a lot of the heat. [Coughs]  
Well, we have to realize that,  
uh, the attrition is going to  
be rather considerable.  
That, that's your point,  
isn't it?

DEAN. I think it, it's  
hard to prevent. Now, that's  
why I raise the point of, of  
this immunity concept again.  
That would take a lot of  
heat. Obviously, the immunity  
might—But it also [unintelligible]  
you find cannot be  
structured, that you're con—,  
you're concerned about,  
there's something lurking here  
that has been brought to  
your attention of recent.  
Uh, now is the time to get the  
facts. People have been  
protecting themselves.  
Dean couldn't get all  
the information. People  
wouldn't give it to him.  
Uh, there are indications now  
that there are other things,  
and you'd like to

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 255

P Well, that is why  
I say on this  
one that  
we have to realize that  
the system is going to  
run and that  
is your problem.

H The only problem  
(inaudible)

D It is structured.  
That your concern about,  
"There is something lurking here."

Now is the time to get the  
facts before Richard  
Nixon himself.

Dean couldn't get all the  
information. People  
wouldn't give it to him.  
There are things,  
there are a lot of things.  
And if you would like to

get all this information and lay it before the public, but it's not going to come out if people are going to go take the Fifth Amendment before a grand jury. It'll never be proved.

I—

PRESIDENT. And it isn't going to come out of a committee.

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 136

DEAN. All right, is that, is that better? Or is it better to have, you know, just, just keep going and have the thing build up and all of a sudden collapse? And, and people get indicted and people, uh, get tarnished.

PRESIDENT. After we've stonewalled it?

DEAN. After we've stonewalled it, and after the President's been accused of covering up that way.

PRESIDENT. That's the point.

EHRlichMAN. Or is there another way?

PRESIDENT. Yeah, like—?

EHRlichMAN. Like the, the Dean statements, where the President then makes a full disclosure of everything which he then has. And is in a position if it does collapse at a later time to say, "Jesus, I had the FBI, and the Grand Jury, and I had my own counsel. I turned over every rock I could find. [. . .]"

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 136

PRESIDENT. [. . .] I ask for a, a written report, which I think, uh, that—which is very general, understand. Understand, [laughs] I don't want

get all of this information and you lay it before the public, but it is not going to come because some people go

to a Grand Jury and tell the truth.

H Lie?

P And it isn't going to come out of the Committee.

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 256–57

D Alright, is that better? Or is it better to have (inaudible) and things blow up and all of a sudden collapse? Think about it.

H After a little time, the President is accused of covering up that way.

P That isn't the point.

E Or is there another way?

P Yeah, like—

E The Dean statements, where the President then makes a bold disclosure of everything which he then has. And is in a position if it does collapse at a later time to say, "I had the FBI and the Grand Jury, and I had my own Counsel. I turned over every document I could find. [. . . .]"

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPTS, p. 257

P [. . .] I asked for a written report, which I do not have, which is very general understand.

to get all that God damned specific.  
I'm thinking now in far  
more general terms, having in  
mind the fact that the  
problem with a specific  
report is that, uh, this proves  
this one and that one that one,  
and you just prove something that  
you didn't do at all. But  
if you make it rather general in  
terms of my—your investigation  
indicates that this man did  
not do it, this man did not  
do it, this man did do that.  
You are going to have to  
say that, John, you know,  
like the, uh, Segretti-Chapin—

I am thinking now in far  
more general terms, having in  
mind the facts, that  
where specifics are concerned,

make it very general,  
your investigation  
of the case. Not that "this man  
is guilty, this man is not  
guilty," but "this man did do that."  
You are going to have to  
say that, John.  
Segretti (inaudible) [. . .]

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, pp. 139-40

EHRlichman. [. . .] But, uh, beyond  
that, the question is, did we,  
did we authorize it,  
did we condone it,  
PRESIDENT. Yeah.  
EHRlichman. did we  
PRESIDENT. Yeah.  
EHRlichman. support it? And  
that kind of thing.  
PRESIDENT. And that's that  
part of it. Getting back  
to the, uh, getting back to  
this, John, uh, you still sort of  
tilt to the panel idea yourself?

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 261

E [. . .] but beyond  
that, the question is did he  
completely authorize  
(inaudible)

P Yeah.  
Getting back  
to this, John.  
You still tilt to the  
panel idea yourself?

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 141

PRESIDENT. Strachan. Do the same  
to him with it.  
DEAN. Strachan?  
PRESIDENT. Maybe. Not so much.  
UNIDENTIFIED. Maybe Jeb.  
DEAN. [Unintelligible]  
I think he has a problem.  
PRESIDENT. Uh, the problem of  
knowledge of it.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 263

P Strachan. This wouldn't do  
anything to him would it?  
D Strachan?  
I would say yes.  
About the same as Jeb.  
H Do you think so?  
D Yes, I think he has a problem.  
P What is the problem  
about?

HALDEMAN. He has a problem of knowledge.  
Magruder has a problem of action.  
PRESIDENT. Action and perjury.

H He has a problem of knowledge.  
D Magruder has a problem of action,  
action and perjury.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 143

EHRlichman. You immediately eliminate one of your options. You can, well, you can eliminate the option of the President being able to take the position he knew nothing about it.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 145

EHRlichman. The, the only thing that we can say is for Ziegler to say, "Look, we've investigated backwards and forwards in the White House, and we're satisfied on the basis of the report we have that nobody in the White House has been involved in a burglary; nobody had notice of it, knowledge of it, participated in the planning, or aided or abetted it in any way."

PRESIDENT. Well, that's what you could say.

EHRlichman. And it happens to be true,

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

EHRlichman. as for that transaction.

PRESIDENT. [Laughs] Sure. As for that transaction.

EHRlichman. Right.

PRESIDENT. Well, John, you, uh, you, uh, you must feel that's, uh, is enough.

DEAN. No [unintelligible]

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 267

H What are your options?  
E Boy, if you could eliminate the option by taking a legal position. You knew nothing about it.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 269

E The only thing we can say is that we have investigated it backwards and forwards in the White House, and have been satisfied on the basis of the report we had that nobody in the White House has been involved in a burglary, nobody had notice of it, knowledge of it, participated in the planning, or aided or abetted it in any way.

And it happens to be true

as for that transaction.

P John, you don't think that is enough?

D No, Mr. President.

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**Conversation in the President's EOB Office**

**Among the President, John Dean, John Ehrlichman,**

**H. R. Haldeman, and John Mitchell**

**MARCH 22, 1973, FROM 1:57 TO 3:43 P.M.**

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MARCH 22, 1973 P.M.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 153

EHRlichMAN. Our brother Mitchell brought us some wisdom on executive privilege which, I believe—

MITCHELL. Technically, Mr. President, I think the only problem [unintelligible] and I'd prefer you just coming out and stating,

PRESIDENT. That's right.

MITCHELL. and, uh, and I would believe that, uh, it

would be well worthwhile to consider to spoil the picture to the point where under the proper circumstances you can settle with

certain former people in the White House

and some [unintelligible]

[telephone rings] some of the current people at the White House [telephone rings] under controlled circumstances should go up and, uh—[telephone rings]

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 156-57

MITCHELL. But [unintelligible] for the sake of going about discussion, in other words that—

Maybe we think that it's appropriate at this time to formalize John's theory on the Segretti matter and the

Watergate matter based on the documentation from the FBI and [unintelligible] FBI [unintelligible] in other words based on—Can the Grand

Jury—what we know came out of there, the trial

[unintelligible] as far as that one incident—whatever the record, uh, could have been available to me. This is why the

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 277

E Our Brother Mitchell brings us some knowledge on executive privilege which I believe—

M (Inaudible)

P I wish Byrd would come out and state—

I believe it would be well worthwhile to—

M Well, there certainly could be stronger people in Washington

P There may be some

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 281-82

M Well, gentlemen for the sake of discussion (inaudible) the normal procedure

for the Segretti matter and the like based on the evaluation of the FBI made (inaudible) or whether it is based on the Grand Jury and the trial transcript or whatever the record could have been available to me—

investigation of—we had the memorandum with the back-up—you know, obviously the FBI after all [unintelligible] and so forth couldn't find anything more. It's not expected that you could or [unintelligible] get out by way of their interrogation [unintelligible] uh, two memorandums from Dean is important [unintelligible] appropriate time with it. John did, and say I [unintelligible] all the public records [unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. We've tried that though, John. Uh—

DEAN. [Clears throat] Why won't—

PRESIDENT. We still have grave doubts about it, though.

DEAN. Well, I don't know—

MITCHELL. I did too before, Mr. President. [. . .]

investigation of the past memorandum would indict him.  
(inaudible)

(two memorandum that the courts have public records)

P We tried that move, John—

M Well, I did too—before Mr. President. [. . .]

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, p. 159

EHRlichman. A case in point: the issue of whether or not I had a phone call reporting the burglary.

DEAN. Right.

EHRlichman. Now, that's all I know about the damn thing is that the Secret Service, or some policeman phoned.

DEAN. But they could go on forever with you on that.

PRESIDENT. Exactly.

DEAN. And I think it ought to be things like we've got in, in this report and this might be, you know, get, give it to Ervin on the confidence that we're not talking about documents being released. We're talking about something that's entirely facts. You could even [unintelligible] write a [unintelligible]

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 284-8

H In case of that the Committee would issue a warrant on our phone calls. Bully!

P That's right.

H That is all I know about the damn thing is that the Secret Service at some point has been bugged.

D And that could go on forever with you on that tack.

I could draw these things like this Staff into this report and have Kleindienst come get it and give it to Ervin in confidence—I am not talking about documents you see. I am talking about something we can spread as facts. You see you could even write a novel with the facts.



HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, P. 161

MITCHELL. The President's report will show that, uh, your simple thought—your simple involvement was missing in the pub bill.

HALDEMAN. No, it would show more on my book, I'm afraid.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 164

PRESIDENT. Let me ask this. Uh, the, this question is for John Ehrlichman and, uh, John Dean. Uh, now you were the two who felt the strongest, uh, on the executive privilege thing [unintelligible].

If I am not mistaken, you thought we ought to draw the line where we did [unintelligible]. Have you changed your mind now?

DEAN. No sir, I think it's a, I think it's a terrific statement.

It's—It, it puts you just where you should be. It's got enough flexibility in it. It's—

PRESIDENT. But now—what—all that John Mitchell is arguing, then, is that now we, we use flexibility

DEAN. That's correct.

PRESIDENT. In order to get on with the coverup plan.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 170

PRESIDENT. That's right. But the point is, we've got to accept the decision of Judge Byrne's [unintelligible] on the bail. The other thing to do on the Dean thing is say—you'd simply say, "Now, that's out. Dean has—he makes the report. Here's everything Dean knows."

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, P. 287

M I think the Court would show that a very simple thought, involvement with the (inaudible)

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 290

P Let me ask this. This question is for John Ehrlichman and Dean. You were the two that felt the strongest on executive privilege thing.

If I am not mistaken, you thought we ought to draw a line here.

Have you changed your mind now?

D No, I think it is a terrific statement. It puts you just where you should be. There is enough flexibility in it.

P Well all John Mitchell is arguing then, is that now we use flexibility

in order to get off the coverup line.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 298

P Well on the Dean thing—you simply say well that is out. Dean has made this report and here is everything Dean knows.

DEAN. Right.

PRESIDENT. That's where, that's why the Dean report is critical.

EHRlichMAN. I think, John, on Monday could say to Ervin if that, uh, question comes up, "I, I know the President's mind on this. He's adamant about my testifying, as such. At the same time he has always indicated that the fruits of my investigation will be known." And just leave it at that for the moment.

E I think John on Monday you could say to Ervin if the question comes up, "I know the President's mind on this and he is adamant about my testifying as such. At the same time he has always indicated that the fruits of my investigation should be available to you." And just leave it at that for the time being.

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 178-79

PRESIDENT. the, uh—Now, uh, we could—Have you considered any other poss—, have you considered the other, all other possibilities you see here, John?

You, you're the one who is supposed to—

DEAN. That's right. I think we,

PRESIDENT. You know the bodies.

DEAN. I think we've had a good go-round on—

PRESIDENT. You think, you think we want to, want to go this route now? And the—Let it hang out, so to speak?

DEAN. Well, it, it isn't really that—

HALDEMAN. It's a limited hang out.

DEAN. It's a limited hang out.

EHRlichMAN. It's a modified limited hang out.

PRESIDENT. Well, it's only the questions of the thing hanging out publicly or privately.

DEAN. What it's doing, Mr.

President, is getting you up above and away from it. And that's the most important thing.

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 308-09

P Yeah.

Have you considered any

other possibilities?

John,

you are the one who is supposed to

know the bodies.

D That's right. I think we have had a good go-round on the things now.

P Do you think we want to go this route now? Let it hang out so to speak?

D Well, it isn't really that—

H It's a limited hang out.

D It is a limited hang out. It's not an absolute hang out.

P But some of the questions look big hanging out publicly or privately.

D What it is doing, Mr. President, is getting you up above and away from it. That is the most important thing.

PRESIDENT. Oh, I know. But I suggested that the other day and we all came down on, uh, remember on the negative on it. Now what's changed our mind?

DEAN. The lack of alternatives or a body.

[Laughter.]

EHRlichMAN. We, went down every alley. [Laughter] Let it go over.

PRESIDENT. Well, I feel that at, uh, I feel that this is, that, uh, I feel that at the very minimum we've got to have the statement and, uh, let's look at it, whatever the hell it is. If, uh, if it opens up doors, it opens up doors, you know.

P Oh, I know. I suggested that the other day and they all came down—negative on it. Now, what has changed their minds?

D----Lack of a candidate or a body.

H Laughter.

M [Inaudible] We went down every alley.

P I feel that at a

very minimum  
we've got to have this statement.  
Let's look at it. I don't know what it—where in the hell is it—  
If it opens up doors,  
it opens up doors—you know.

The following portion at the end of the March 22, 1973 conversation (beginning on p. 180 of the House Judiciary Committee transcripts) does not appear in the "Submission of Recorded Presidential Conversations, April 30, 1974" nor does it appear in the transcript provided by the White House to the Special Prosecutor in January 1974 and to the Judiciary Committee in March 1974.

PRESIDENT. Sure, sure.

EHRlichMAN. Okay.

[NOTE.—At this point, a portion of the discussion has been deleted.]

MITCHELL. [Unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

MITCHELL. Believe me, it's a lot of work.

PRESIDENT. Oh, great. I may [unintelligible]. Well, let me tell you, you've done a hell of a job here.

UNIDENTIFIED. [Unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. I didn't mean for you. I thought we had a boy here. No, you, uh, John, uh, carried a very, very heavy load. Uh, both Johns as a matter of fact, but, uh, I was going to say, uh, uh, John Dean is, uh, [unintelligible] got—put the fires out, almost got the damn thing nailed down till past the election and so forth. We all know what it is. Embarrassing God damn thing the way it went, and so forth. But, in my view, uh, some of it will come out; we will survive it. That's the way it is. That's the way you've got to look at it.

DEAN. We were within a few miles months ago, but, uh, we're—

PRESIDENT. The point is, get the God damn thing over with.

DEAN. That's right.

PRESIDENT. That's the thing to do. That's the other thing that I like about this. I'd like to get—But you really would draw the line on—But, I know, we can't make a complete cave and have the people go up there and testify. You would agree on that?

MITCHELL. I agree.

PRESIDENT. You agree on that, John?

DEAN. If we're in the posture of everything short of giving them a public session [unintelligible] and the whole deal. You're not hiding anything.

PRESIDENT. Yeah. Particularly if, particularly if we have the Dean statement.

DEAN. And they've been given out.

PRESIDENT. And your view about the Dean statement is to give that to the Committee and not make it public, however.

DEAN. That's correct, I think that's—

PRESIDENT. And say it's, uh—

MITCHELL. Give it to the Committee for the purpose—

PRESIDENT. —the purpose of their investigation.

MITCHELL. [Unintelligible] to limit the number of witnesses

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

MITCHELL. which are called up there, instead of a buck-shot operation.

PRESIDENT. And say here, and also say, "This may help you in your investigation."

MITCHELL. Right.

PRESIDENT. "This is everything we know, Mr. Senator." That's what I was preparing to say. "This is everything we know; I know nothing more. This is the whole purpose, and that's that. If you need any further information, my, our counsel will furnish it, uh, that is not in here." It'd be tempting to—"But this is all we know. Now, in addition to that, you are welcome to have, have people, but you've got to have—" I think that the best way to have it is in executive session, but incidentally, you say executive session for those out of government as well as in?

MITCHELL. That's right.

PRESIDENT. Chapin and Colson should be called in.

DEAN. [Unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. I would think so.

MITCHELL. Sure. Because you have the same problem.

PRESIDENT. You see we ask—but your point—we ask for, uh, the privilege, and at least, you know, we, we, our statement said it applies to former as well as present [unintelligible]

DEAN. Now, our statement—you leave a lot of flexibility that you normally—for one thing, taking the chance appearing, and uh, however, informal relationships will always be worked out [unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. Informal relations.

DEAN. That's right.

MITCHELL. You have the same basis—

PRESIDENT. Well, it might. When I say that, that, that—the written interrogatory thing is not as clear [unintelligible] maybe Ervin is making it that way, but I think that's based on what maybe, uh, we said that the—I don't think I said we would only write, in, in the press conference, written interrogatories.

DEAN. That's right. I don't think—

PRESIDENT. I didn't say that at all.

DEAN. Ervin just jumped to that conclusion as a result of my letter to, uh—

PRESIDENT. I think that's what it was.

DEAN. I think that's what's happened.

PRESIDENT. Not that your letter was wrong—it was right. But, uh, the whole written interrogatory, we didn't discuss other possibilities.

MITCHELL. With respect to your ex-employees, you have the same problem of getting into areas of privileged communications. You certainly can make a good case for keeping them in executive session.

PRESIDENT. That's right.

MITCHELL. [Unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. And, and in this sense the precedent for working—you can do it in cases in the future, which [unintelligible] executive session, and then the privilege can be raised without having, uh, on a legal basis, without having the guilt by the Fifth Amendment, not like pleading the Fifth Amendment—

MITCHELL. Right.

PRESIDENT. the implication always being raised.

MITCHELL. [Unintelligible] and self-protection in that view?

PRESIDENT. What? Yeah.

DEAN. [Unintelligible] Fifth Amendment.

PRESIDENT. That's right. That's what we're going to do here.

MITCHELL. Those—boy, this thing has to be turned around. Got to get you off the lid.

PRESIDENT. Right.

DEAN. All right.

PRESIDENT. All right, fine, Chuck.

MITCHELL. Good to see you.

PRESIDENT. How long were you in Florida? Just, uh—

MITCHELL. I was down there overnight. I was four hours on the witness stand testifying for the government in these, uh, racket cases involving wiretapping. The God damn fool Judge down there let them go all over the lot and ask me any questions that they wanted to. Just ridiculous. You know, this had, all has to do with the discretionary act of signing a piece of paper that I'm authorized by the statute. There were twenty-seven hood lawyers that questioned me.

PRESIDENT. You know, uh, the, uh, you, you can say when I [unintelligible] I was going to say that the, uh—[Picks up phone] Can you get me Prime Minister Trudeau in Canada, please. [Hangs up] I was going to say that Dean has really been, uh, something on this.

MITCHELL. That he has, Mr. President, no question about it, he's a very—

PRESIDENT. Son-of-a-bitching tough thing.

MITCHELL. You've got a very solid guy that's handled some tough things. And, I also want to say these lawyers that you have think very highly of him. I know that John spends his time with certain ones—

PRESIDENT. Dean? Discipline is very high.

MITCHELL. Parkinson, O'Brien.

PRESIDENT. Yes, Dean says it's great. Well, you know I feel for all the people, you know, I mean everybody that's involved. Hell, is all we're doing is their best to [unintelligible] and so forth. [Unintelligible]. That's, that's why I can't let you go, go down, John? It's all right. Come in.

DEAN. Uh—

PRESIDENT. Did you find out anything?

DEAN. I was, I went over to Ziegler's office. They have an office over there. Paul O'Brien'll be down here in a little while to see you. I'm going over to Ziegler's office and finish this up now.

MITCHELL. Are you coming back?

DEAN. Yes, I'll come back over here then.

MITCHELL. Okay.

PRESIDENT. Yeah. Well, when you come back—he can, uh, is that office open for John now?

DEAN. Yes.

PRESIDENT. Then he can go over there as soon [unintelligible] this. But, uh, the, uh, the one thing I don't want to do is to—Now let me make this clear. I, I, I thought it was, uh, very, uh, very cruel thing as it turned out—although at the time I had to tell [unintelligible]—what happened to Adams. I don't want it to happen with Watergate—the Watergate matter. I think he made a, made a mistake, but he shouldn't have been sacked, he shouldn't have been—And, uh, for that reason, I am perfectly willing to—I don't give a shit what happens. I want you all to stonewall it, let them plead the Fifth Amendment, cover-up or anything else, if it'll save it—save the plan. That's the whole point. On the other hand, uh, uh, I would prefer, as I said to you, that you do it the other way. And I would particularly prefer to do it that other way if it's going to come out that way anyway. And that my view, that, uh, with the number of jackass people that they've got that they can call, they're going to—The story they get out through leaks, charges, and so forth, and innuendos, will be a hell of a lot worse than the story they're going to get out by just letting it out there.

MITCHELL. Well—

PRESIDENT. I don't know. But that's, uh, you know, up to this point, the whole theory has been containment, as you know, John.

MITCHELL. Yeah.

PRESIDENT. And now, now we're shifting. As far as I'm concerned, actually from a personal standpoint, if you weren't making a personal sacrifice—it's unfair—Haldeman and Dean. That's what Eisenhower—that's all he cared about. He only cared about—Christ, "Be sure he was clean." Both in the fund thing and the Adams thing. But I don't look at it that way. And I just—That's the thing I am really concerned with. We're going to protect our people, if we can.

MITCHELL. Well, the important thing is to get you up above it for this first operation. And then to see where the chips fall and, uh, and, uh, get through this Grand Jury thing up here. Uh, then the Committee is another question. [Telephone rings] What we ought to have is a reading as to what is [telephone rings] coming out of this Committee and we, if we handle the cards as it progresses. [Telephone rings]

PRESIDENT. Yeah. But anyway, we'll go on. And, uh, I think in order—it'll probably turn just as well, getting them in the position of, even though it hurts for a little while.

MITCHELL. Yeah.

PRESIDENT. You know what I mean. People say, "Well, the President's [unintelligible]," and so forth. Nothing is lasting. You know people get so disturbed about [unintelligible]. Now, when we do move [unintelligible] we can move, in a, in a, in a, in the proper way.

MITCHELL. If you can do it in a controlled way it would help and good, but, but, but the other thing you have to remember is that this stuff is going to come out of that Committee, whether—

PRESIDENT. That's right.

MITCHELL. And it's going to come out no matter what.

PRESIDENT. As if, as if I, and then it looks like I tried to keep it from coming out.

MITCHELL. That's why it's important that that statement go up to the Committee.

PRESIDENT. [Picks up phone.] Hello. I don't want to talk. Sure. [Hangs Up.] Christ, Sure, we'll—

MITCHELL. It's like these Gray, Gray hearings. They had it five days running that the files were turned over to John Dean, just five days running—the same story.

PRESIDENT. Same story.

MITCHELL. Right.

PRESIDENT. The files should have been turned over.

MITCHELL. Just should have, should have demanded them. You should have demanded all of them.

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible] what the hell was he doing as counsel to the President without getting them? He was—I told him to conduct an investigation, and he did.

MITCHELL. I know.

PRESIDENT. Well, it's like everything else.

MITCHELL. Anything else for us to—

PRESIDENT. Get on that other thing. If Baker can—Baker is not proving much of a reed up to this point. He's smart enough.

MITCHELL. Howard is smart enough, but, uh, we've got to carry him. Uh, I think he has and I've been puzzling over a way to have a liaison with him and, and, uh—

PRESIDENT. He won't talk on the phone with anybody according to Kleindienst. He thinks his phone is tapped.

MITCHELL. He does?

PRESIDENT. Who's tapping his phone?

MITCHELL. I don't know.

PRESIDENT. Who would he think, who would he think would tap his phone? I guess maybe that we would.

MITCHELL. I don't doubt that.

PRESIDENT. He must think that Ervin—

MITCHELL. Maybe.

PRESIDENT. Or, or a newspaper.

MITCHELL. Newspaper, or, or the Democratic Party, or somebody. There's got to be somebody to liaison with Kleindienst to get in a position where—It's all right from foreknowledge through Kleindienst.

PRESIDENT. You really wonder if you take Wally Johnson and, uh—He's a pretty good boy, isn't he?

MITCHELL. Yeah. [Unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. You might, you might throw that out to Dean. Dean says he doesn't want to be in such a, such a public position. He talked to the Attorney General [unintelligible] Wally Johnson. And he said that—

MITCHELL. Well, he will be in the Department,

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

MITCHELL. talking to the Department.

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible] Mansfield's down there—

MITCHELL. Everything else under control?

PRESIDENT. Yeah, we're all doing fine. I think, though, that as long as, uh, everyone and so forth, is a, uh—[unintelligible] still [unintelligible]

MITCHELL. All of Washington—the public interest in this thing, you know.

PRESIDENT. It isn't nash—[unintelligible] er, national [unintelligible] concerns me. [Unintelligible] worries the shit out of us here regard—, regarding [unintelligible]

MITCHELL. Just in time.

PRESIDENT. But the point is that, uh, I don't—There's no need for [unintelligible]. I have nothing but intuition but hell, I don't know. I, but—Again you really have to protect the Presidency, too. That's the point.

MITCHELL. Well this does no violence to the Presidency at all, this concept—

PRESIDENT. The whole scenario.

MITCHELL. Yeah.

PRESIDENT. No, it, uh, uh, d—, that's what I mean. The purpose of this scenario is to clean the Presidency. [Unintelligible] what they say "All right. Here's the report, we're going to cooperate with the Committee," and so forth and so on. The main thing is to answer [unintelligible] and that should be a God damned satisfactory answer, John.

MITCHELL. It should be.

PRESIDENT. Shouldn't it.

MITCHELL. It answers all of their complaints they've had to date.

PRESIDENT. That's right. They get cross-examination.

MITCHELL. Right. They get everything but the public spectacle.

PRESIDENT. Public spectacle. And the reason we don't have that is because you have to argue.

MITCHELL. They have to argue and—

PRESIDENT. on a legal and you don't want them to be, uh, used as a, uh, uh, for unfairly, to, to have somebody charged.

MITCHELL. It's our fault that you have somebody charged with not answering the Committee's questions [unintelligible] to John, make sure you put it in, make sure that you put it again in the argument, the clean record, and that's the reason why you have an executive session. Because the record that comes out of it is clean. But, uh, in areas of dispute—

PRESIDENT. I'd rather think, though, that all of their yakking about this, uh, we often said, John—we've got problems.

MITCHELL. [Unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. Might cost them [unintelligible]. Think of their problems. They, those bastards are really—they're just really something. Where is their leadership?

MITCHELL. They don't have any leadership, and they're leaping on every new issue.

[NOTE.—At this point, a portion of the discussion has been deleted.]



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**Conversation in the Oval Office**

**Between the President and John Dean**

**APRIL 16, 1973, FROM 10:00 TO 10:40 A.M.**

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APRIL 16, 1973 P.M.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 195

PRESIDENT. But, you had knowledge; Haldeman had a lot of knowledge; and Ehrlichman had knowledge.

DEAN. Right.

PRESIDENT. And I suppose I did. I mean, I am planning to assume some culpability on that [unintelligible]

DEAN. I don't think so.

PRESIDENT. Why not?

DEAN. Uh—

PRESIDENT. I plan to be tough on myself as I am on the other thing, though, I, I must say I didn't really give it a thought at the time because I didn't know, uh—

DEAN. No one gave it a thought.

PRESIDENT. You did. You did.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, p. 199

PRESIDENT. What got Magruder to talk?

DEAN. Uh—

PRESIDENT. I would like to take the credit.

DEAN. Because, because, well, uh, [laughs] he knew that—

PRESIDENT. I thought—I was hoping that you had seen him, because, uh—

DEAN. There was—Well, he was, he was told, he was told (1) that, you know, there was going to be no chance—

PRESIDENT. You remember, though, when you made the statement about, uh, just making a note here about drawing the wagons up around the

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 798

P But you had knowledge; Haldeman had knowledge; Ehrlichman had knowledge

and I suppose I did that night. That assumes culpability on that, doesn't it?

D I don't think so.

P Why not?

I plan to be tough on myself so I can handle the other thing. I must say I did not even give it a thought at the time.

D No one gave it a thought at the time.

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 804

P What got Magruder to talk?

I would like to take the credit.

D Well.

P I was hoping you had seen him because—

D He was told, one, that there was no chance.

P As a matter of fact, he made a statement about (inaudible) around the

White House. Uh, based uh, basically you thought the primary [unintelligible]—this was talking about pre-DEAN. Pre—

PRESIDENT. knowledge—was all in the Committee. Right?

DEAN. That's right. Where it is.

PRESIDENT. That's right. But on Magruder, come again. What's the deal, deal there?

White House. I guess

this was pre-

primaries—it was all committed.

P But on Magruder, come again.

# HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 200-01

PRESIDENT. —I'm sure. On Liddy, I wanted to be sure that I, that you recall, on our conversation, I, uh—You asked me to do something. I've left it with Petersen now. He said he'd handle it. Uh, that's the proper place—

DEAN. That's right.

PRESIDENT. You see, when Liddy says he can't talk unless he hears from higher authority—I am not his higher authority.

DEAN. No.

PRESIDENT. It's Mitchell.

DEAN. Well, but I think he's looking for the ultimate—

PRESIDENT. What do you think he's thinking about?

DEAN. I think he's thinking about the President.

PRESIDENT. Clemency?

DEAN. He thinks—he has the impression that you and Mitchell probably talk on the telephone daily about this.

PRESIDENT. You know we've never talked about it.

DEAN. I understand that.

PRESIDENT. I have never talked to Mitchell about this. Oh, except about when, whether we go, uh, the executive privilege thing.

DEAN. Right.

# WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 805-06

P On Liddy I wanted to be sure. You recall our conversation. You asked me to do something. I have left it with Petersen now and he said he would handle it. That's the proper place.

When Liddy says he cannot talk with peers it must be higher authority, I am not his higher authority.

It is Mitchell.

D Well, he obviously is looking for the ultimate,

D but I think he is looking for the ultimate.

He has the impression that you and Mitchell probably talk on the telephone daily about this.

P You know we have never talked about this.

D I understand that.

P I have never talked to Mitchell about this except when whether we go the executive privilege thing.

D Right.

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**Conversation in the Oval Office**

**Between the President and John Dean**

**APRIL 16, 1973, FROM 4:07 TO 4:35 P.M.**

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APRIL 16, 1973 P.M.

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, pp. 211-12

PRESIDENT. And that goes out ahead of, frankly the Magruder-Mitchell head-chop business.

DEAN. That's right; what's the timing on that? Do you know?

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSCRIPT, pp. 215-18

DEAN. Can't [unintelligible]— Yes, I said, "No abuse."

PRESIDENT. Right.

DEAN. [Unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible] Magruder [unintelligible]

DEAN. They're taking him into court to do this.

PRESIDENT. Huh?

DEAN. They're going to take Magru—

PRESIDENT. I know.

DEAN. —der into court to do this.

PRESIDENT. Lou Lavelle [phonetic] went. [Unintelligible]

DEAN. I know.

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible]

DEAN. I don't think we're going to have many leaks out of the Grand Jury or, or the [unintelligible] court. Local court et cetera.

PRESIDENT. Uh, but uh, what do you think John [unintelligible] operating too short—by a day.

DEAN. What about Hunt, too.

PRESIDENT. You, Haldeman and Ehrlichman. Magruder knows. I'd like

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, p. 959

P (unintelligible) I don't know that the letter (inaudible) and that goes out ahead, frankly, of the Magruder-Mitchell hitch doesn't it?

D That's right, I wasn't counting on that—

WHITE HOUSE TRANSCRIPT, pp. 963-65

Something about Magruder

D —they are going to take him to the courts

P I know—he has agreed to (inaudible)

to follow that. [Unintelligible]

DEAN. What—How can he respond to that? I don't understand that.

PRESIDENT. Uh huh.

DEAN. [Unintelligible] his testimony before the Grand Jury.

PRESIDENT. This testimony makes a statement [unintelligible]

DEAN. I can't in public statement without naming any individuals.

[Unintelligible] the rights of that individual. That's why I don't think that I, I can't foresee what he's going to say. [Unintelligible] naming any, any individual.

PRESIDENT. You see, I think my own [unintelligible] I requested that the U.S. Attorney call before the Grand Jury.

DEAN. [Unintelligible] all, all your staff.

PRESIDENT. I am to cooperate.

DEAN. Um huh.

PRESIDENT. How about trying that for a little [unintelligible] John? [Unintelligible] if

the White House staff gets called before the Grand Jury and questioned.

DEAN. The prosecution will [unintelligible] needed somebody to wash or, or the like. They may or may not want to hear, and—by the way, I would, I would bounce that one off of Henry, uh—

PRESIDENT. Yeah, Ehrlichman and Haldeman and Magruder.

DEAN. It is, it has been? Or—

PRESIDENT. We can always find reasons.

DEAN. And Hunt's.

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible] oh, my God, we've got to leave [unintelligible] Ehrlichman and Haldeman predict, thank God [unintelligible] world. They were on top; they're shot down.

DEAN. That's right. [Unintelligible]. The other thing that always worried me is not getting shot down, but not giving out enough, and starting a, a chain going that we didn't want,

D I can't foresee what we would want to say about any investigation—

P "You see I make my own"

How about trying that?

"Let the White House Staff (inaudible)"



because we didn't give enough. Uh, would, uh—[coughs] [Unintelligible] unfortunately, the source of the problem, and it's just, it's mind boggling but you think about it, uh—

PRESIDENT. And—

DEAN. He didn't care—

PRESIDENT. All across [unintelligible]

DEAN. That's right. Lord knows. Lord knows [unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. And after he didn't turn it off—

DEAN. And then we bailed him out, and that's why we have a problem.

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible] and then you said the whole White House at least, uh, up to you, and Ehrlichman, Haldeman after regretfully dealing with the fact. We've just got to keep the thing from going upstairs, to Mitchell, I mean, your conversation with Magruder—

DEAN. That's right.

PRESIDENT. The fact that, uh, you're supposed to support him—everybody—

DEAN. Uh huh.

PRESIDENT. and therefore Mitchell and [unintelligible]

DEAN. Oh, Mitchell, Mitchell was making heavy comments about, you know, if Hunt and Liddy blow, the White House will have a bigger problem than he will, sort of things.

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

DEAN. Whatever they had done over here would be quite embarrassing during the election, also.

PRESIDENT. Yeah.

DEAN. And I suppose there's some truth in that. No hard facts. Just [unintelligible] Ellsberg's office, and things like that.

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible] that wouldn't have been very good.

DEAN. You know, uh, you know, poor Bud Krogh, uh, is just miserable, knowing what he knows.

PRESIDENT. Meaning Ellsberg?

D Unfortunately it doesn't solve; your problem. Mine bother me but (unintelligible)

Mitchell was making heavy comments that Liddy and Hunt will make heavier problems for the White House than he will. (unintelligible)

D Poor Bud Krogh is so miserable. Knowing what he knows—  
P Need any help with him?

DEAN. Yeah, he's—

PRESIDENT. Yeah, well [unintelligible]

DEAN. Hopefully not.

There's no reason it should be.

The only evidence that they have which they must—That's one of the reasons I have argued against a special prosecutor. The special prosecutor is going to run across evidence that's screwy. [Unintelligible] that picture, that picture in front of the doctor's office.

[Unintelligible] can't get into that.

PRESIDENT. This is not their case—that they're—

DEAN. That's not their case.

It just got forced on them.

PRESIDENT. That's right.

DEAN. When I was first, you know, first talking, uh, with regard to [unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible]

DEAN. they wanted to just, just, just the original time run these guys through the Grand Jury, with immunity, and see what came out.

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible]

DEAN. Uh, let us fight our battle with the Senate.

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible]

DEAN. Absolutely.

PRESIDENT. We've been through this particular [unintelligible]

DEAN. They pulled it out inch by inch, uh, and it'll just, uh, it'll bring you down with it in this [unintelligible] committee.

PRESIDENT. Well, it hurts, as you say.

DEAN. [Unintelligible]

PRESIDENT. It won't pull us down. [Unintelligible]. We can wait and handle it in the [unintelligible] court.

DEAN. We never—

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible] virtually nine months. [Unintelligible]

D There is no reason that he should be. The only evidence that they have (inaudible)

D It just got forced on him.

When I was first talking to him—

“Run these guys through the Grand Jury—”

DEAN. Dean couldn't get there with the facts.

PRESIDENT. [Unintelligible] they'll ask.

DEAN. I didn't have the power to compel Mitchell or Magruder to tell me what had happened. I just surmised what had happened.

PRESIDENT. The [unintelligible]

DEAN. I've been, uh,

to be very honest,

I've talked about it around here before I got to see you

for many, many months. Uh, I said you know, I said the containment theory is not working anymore so you might as well forget it.

PRESIDENT. Right. That's what you came in to see me? Fine.

DEAN. Fine. It works.

Finally, I started coming in to see you and that's when we started getting action.

PRESIDENT. I have no right [unintelligible]

DEAN. Then I was told by all of those after joining this, that'd be talking surrender. I'm not talking surrender.

I'm talking realistically. [Unintelligible] investigation going.

They've got subpoena power, immunity power, and they're going to break somebody up there, just as sure—

And, uh, I've always said that it's a domino situation—

One, one goes—and that's exactly what's happened here,

Mr. President.

PRESIDENT. The poor guys.

DEAN. The poor men and the [unintelligible] all the way around.

PRESIDENT. Secretaries, [unintelligible]

DEAN. That's right.

President and Dean. [Unintelligible]

DEAN. How do you want to handle it: Ehrlichman, Haldeman, and Dean?

To be very honest with you,

I have talked about it around here

before I got in to see

for many, many months. Then I thought

I could not let it interfere with

my work anymore so I thought

I might as well forget it.

P That's right. That's when

you came in to see me.

D Finally, that is when I came in to see you and

get some answers.

D Now, they have their full investigation going—

with subpoena power, investigative power, et cetera.

It is all like a set of dominoes if one goes they will all go.

P Secretaries, et cetera

D I don't know (unintelligible) They are going to handle Ehrlichman and Haldeman.

PRESIDENT. That's a good question. [Unintelligible] the biggest part of that question is when, under the circumstances—it's, uh—

DEAN. Here's the argument I, I've been meaning to tell you: First of all, there is, there's, there is potential—There are prima facie situations right now that are very difficult in, uh, to prove in context that—been made aware of. Uh, does that thereby make it necessary for you to make a judgment that those people should leave the staff until their, their name is cleared?

PRESIDENT. It makes it necessary for me to relieve them of any duty if this peaks.

DEAN. That's right.

PRESIDENT. Which I have done. It makes it necessary for me to [unintelligible] Haldeman turn it down, which I end up.

DEAN. But that—I don't know—

PRESIDENT. I'm happy to discuss it with him, but whether, you just say let's go all out and tromp their ass. I do not—

DEAN. That's the tougher question, because one, that's putting you in the position of being the, the judge and trier of the facts.

PRESIDENT. Before—

DEAN. Before all the facts are in, necessarily.

PRESIDENT. That's really my problem on that. I mean, I—so this fellow says that, and this fellow says that—that's the thing that concerns me.

DEAN. Well, maybe that's the way this ought to be handled, publicly. Say, "I have certain information about—you know, allegations have been made about persons, some publicly—some have not become public yet—but I am not in a position where I can make any"

PRESIDENT. Yeah. Yeah.

There is a potential prima facie situation right now (inaudible)

which thereby makes it necessary for you to make a judgment that those people should leave the staff.

P Make it necessary for me to relieve them from any duties at this state.

D That's right.

P I don't have to discuss it with him—but just say, "You are all out"

D That is a tougher question because one that is putting you in the position of being the judge of the entire facts

before all the facts are in necessarily.

P That is really my problem in a nutshell. So those fellows say that—this fellow says that—

D Maybe that is the way this ought to be handled. You say, "I have heard information about allegations about (inaudible) some publicly and some have not become public yet. I am not in a position to

DEAN. "judgments, because all the facts aren't in yet."

PRESIDENT. But you really think, John, don't you, that, ugh, you [unintelligible] in the meantime—

DEAN. Okay.

PRESIDENT. Your statement, this statement is terribly important. And, then frankly, something very shortly beforehand [unintelligible]. Right?

DEAN. Right.

PRESIDENT. I'll talk to you on Thursday. [Unintelligible]. Thank you.

DEAN. Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT. Would you say that you [unintelligible] move, uh [unintelligible] in this area?

DEAN. Right.

PRESIDENT. And, uh [unintelligible].

judge because all the facts are not in yet (inaudible)?

P (Inaudible) But you agree, John, don't you that

the statement is fair to everybody?  
And frankly—(Balance inaudible—door closes.)

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